

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus, comprising:
- 5 a transport belt provided with a plurality of holes which extend through a thickness of the belt;
- a vacuum table which generates a vacuum, the vacuum table being positioned on one side of the transport belt; and
- 10 a porous sheet positioned between the belt and the vacuum table, the vacuum table, the porous sheet, and the transport belt being in fluid communication, the vacuum generated by the vacuum table creating a suction on a substrate placed on the transport belt, the porous sheet restricting fluid flow between the table and the transport belt to maintain a desired vacuum as an area of the transport belt covered by the substrate varies as the substrate is transported through the printing system.
- 15 2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the desired vacuum is maintained in the range from about -0.05 psi to about -0.3 psi.
3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the vacuum table is coupled to a motor which generates a vacuum.
4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the motor is coupled to a CPU which instructs
- 20 the motor as to the amount of vacuum to generate.
5. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the vacuum table is coupled to a vacuum sensor which detects the vacuum provided by the vacuum table.

6. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the vacuum sensor and the motor are coupled to a CPU which receives vacuum information from the sensor and sends instructions to the motor.
7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the transport belt is made from woven polyester.
8. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the woven polyester is a reinforced polyurethane.
9. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the transport belt has a thickness of about 0.09 inch.
10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the holes of the transport belt are spaced apart by about 1 inch.
11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the holes of the transport belt have a diameter of about 0.1 inch.
12. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the transport belt is made from stainless steel.
13. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the thickness of the transport belt is about 0.008 inch.
14. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the porous sheet is made of sintered, porous polyethylene.
15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the porous sheet has a thickness of about 0.5 inch.